

CAMPGROUND HOST - VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

POLICY

The Parks and Recreation Division encourages the use of volunteers to serve as Campground Hosts at all parks with campgrounds. All campgrounds should have a Volunteer Campground Host scheduled during heavy use seasons. Volunteer Hosts must comply with all State Laws, Department Rules, Policies & Procedures and Director's Orders.

The Volunteer Campground Host Program was developed in order to increase the level and quality of service that Michigan State Park visitors and campers receive. Hospitality is the most important function of our Hosts. They extend a warm welcome, maintain a friendly presence in the campgrounds, provide answers to questions regarding park activities, local attractions, and loan campers forgotten equipment. Hosts contribute their volunteer services with the goal of assuring our visitors a comfortable enjoyable stay and enhancing the quality of their outdoor-recreation experience.

Volunteer Campground Hosts have come to be viewed by campers as standard amenities in our campgrounds, rather than extra attractions. Our Hosts are friendly, responsible, experienced, campers who provide valuable assistance to our park employees, and important services to our campers, while enjoying free camping for extended periods within our campgrounds.

The Host Program Leader is the park employee who is responsible for overseeing the Volunteer Campground Host Program within a specific campground. This park employee is designated as such by the appropriate Unit Supervisor, and could be a Ranger, Interpreter, Lead Worker, Seasonal Ranger, etc. The Host Program Leader should be available to the Host on a daily basis, and knowledgeable of the services and activities provided by the Host. The Program Leader is also responsible for completing an evaluation at the end of the Host's service schedule. Many of the responsibilities of the Park and Recreation Supervisor, which are indicated in the Host Procedures, should be delegated to the Host Program Leader.

PROCEDURE

Number of Hosts:

Normally, each campground will be limited to one Host at a time. If a Park and Recreation Supervisor wishes to have simultaneous Hosts, he/she should submit a written request (with copies to the immediate supervisor), with justification, to the Division Volunteer Program Manager. Prior approval is required from the Division Volunteer Program Manager.

Timetables:

Campground Hosts are normally scheduled between May 1 and September 30. At other times of the year, Parks and Recreation Supervisors at designated parks may assign Campground Hosts based upon Host availability and the needs of the parks.

Priority and Selection:

Applications are accepted year-round. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age. Michigan residents are given priority. Campground Hosts are selected from those who submit proper applications until existing vacancies are filled. Interviews will be conducted by the Parks and Recreation Supervisors. Positions should be filled as soon as possible. Unsuccessful applicants must also be notified by the appropriate Park and Recreation Supervisor.

Campground Host positions are not recurrent from year to year. Current Hosts should inform the Park and Recreation Supervisor of their interest in returning, and submit completed Host Applications for the upcoming year.

Campground Hosts cannot be assigned to the same work location as relatives who are current employees of the DNR.

DNR employees are prohibited from residing on the Host campsite.

A Host Application must be completed and returned to Division Office as soon as the selection process has been completed. Safety/liability standards require a completed form in Division Office. Hosts may not begin service schedules until this form is on file in Lansing.

Criminal History Check:

The following policy shall be used to govern all Campground Host assignments:

Host applicants who are chosen by Park Supervisors to be Campground Hosts shall have criminal history background checks performed on them using the Michigan State Police Internet Criminal History Access Tool (I.C.H.A.T). Park personnel shall verify the Applicant's full name and birth date before submitting the confirmation/vacancy form to the Volunteer Coordinator. Verification will be done by comparing the birth date on the application with the birth date on the applicant's driver license.

The Division's Volunteer Coordinator will conduct a criminal history check on each applicant using the I.C.H.A.T system and place all results in a secure file. Park Supervisors will be notified of any criminal history charges found in the applicant's record. Any applicant having one or more of the following convictions will not be placed in Campground Host positions:

1. Any Felony
2. The Following Misdemeanors:
 - Resisting and Obstructing
 - Indecent Exposure
 - Child Abuse
 - Criminal Sexual Conduct
 - Assault and Battery on a Police Officer
 - Domestic Assault

Exceptions may be made by the Volunteer Program Manager and will be judged on the following factors:

- Nature of the Crime
- Amount of Time Since Conviction
- Recent Record
- Recurrence of the Crime

Length of Service:

All Volunteer Campground Host schedules are at the discretion of the Supervisor/Manager of the Unit and based on the needs of the Park. Schedule must be no less than four consecutive weeks.

Volunteer Campground Hosts scheduled for more than two months, or eight weeks, at a particular park are limited to a maximum term of three consecutive years at that park, unless otherwise approved by the Division Volunteer Program Manager.

Exceptions to the minimum or maximum time periods must be approved by the Volunteer Host Program Manager.

Scheduling:

Being a Campground Host represents a major commitment of time to a particular park unit. Campground Host on-duty hours should be mutually agreed upon by the Host and the Park and Recreation Supervisor conducting the Host Program. A minimum of 30 hours per week should be contributed by each person who serves as a Campground Host. If a couple is assigned as a team, then each individual must provide at least 30 hours of service per week.

Hosts are required to provide services for five days of each week, including weekends and holidays. They may be off duty two weekdays. Off-duty hours should be arranged in blocks to the greatest extent possible. Additional days off and other changes in scheduling will be subject to the Park and Recreation Supervisor's approval.

Hosts may not be scheduled to relieve paid employees on breaks or scheduled to perform job tasks normally assigned to paid employees.

Supervisors/Program Leaders should have a written copy of the Host's schedule (important for emergency purposes).

Host Equipment:

Campground Hosts must provide their own camping unit, equipment, and personal items. While at the park, a Host might be loaned equipment by the Park and Recreation Supervisor that other campers may borrow. This camping equipment may include rakes, brooms, a level, scissors, etc.; recreational equipment may include horseshoes, volleyball and net, etc.

Park and Recreation Supervisors should provide Hosts with all of the equipment and materials necessary to perform the services they have been assigned. All equipment must be returned to the Park and Recreation Supervisor upon completion of the assignment, or other termination.

Campsite:

It is the Park and Recreation Supervisor's responsibility to select the site and facilities to be used by the Campground Host. The site must be in a highly visible area, such as close to the campground entrance or across from a campground restroom building. The Campground Host site should not be located on a priority site such as on a lakeshore or along a channel.

The Host campsite must be kept neat and clean at all times. No storage buildings, structures, or other items can be stored on the Host campsite that would give the appearance of a semi-permanent or permanent dwelling.

DNR employees are prohibited from residing on the Host campsite.

The Park and Recreation Supervisor will provide the Host campsite with the following:

1. "Campground Host" sign.
2. Bulletin Board or Eraser Board.
3. "In/Out" sign or "On Duty/Off" Duty sign (optional).
4. Display rack or table for brochures, maps, etc.
5. Electricity (if available), Water (if available), and Coffee Maker.

Budget

Each confirmed Volunteer Campground Host position (not per Host Person) will have access to \$100 a month funds for Host supplies. This funding will be provided from the Volunteer Host Program budget and be disbursed at the Park level. Any questions regarding this allotment should be directed to the Volunteer Host Program Manager.

Each Unit where a Host is assigned will be required to keep track of the expenditure of this Host budget on Host Budget Form PR3147. These forms must be kept with all verifying receipts at the Park level for a period of five (5) years. The Unit has the following options for dispersing the money to the Hosts:

1. Paying the invoices via MAIN as they are presented.
2. Give the money to the Host, requiring they provide receipts for expenses.
3. Keep the money and reimburse the Host with cash as they provide receipts.
4. The Unit makes all the purchases themselves from a list the Host provides.

Whatever method is used, the Unit is responsible to have receipts for expenses for the \$100 per month given for each Host position on assignment at their Unit.

Visitors to Host's Campsite:

Guest visits and lengths of stay should be responsible so as not to interfere with the Host's duties. The only people, who may reside on the Host campsite long-term, more than 3 days, are those on the application.

Motor Vehicle Permits:

Campground Hosts are not required to purchase motor vehicle permits (MVP's) for their vehicles when at their assigned parks. The policy, which governs residential Division employees, also applies to Hosts and their guests: "Guests of employees who live in the park or recreation area are not required to have MVP's. However, guests of any employees who use the public facilities for recreational purposes will be required to purchase a permit." That portion of the Camping Policy pertaining to the maximum allowable number of vehicles per campsite applies to the Campground Host site also.

Uniforms:

All Campground Hosts shall be provided with a Volunteer Campground Host vest, t-shirt, hat or visor from the Division Office. Nametags will be provided by the appropriate Park and Recreation Supervisor per DNR Policy 01.11 Uniforms. Parks may request uniform parts by completing the section in the application.

Name tags, and at least one other uniform part, must be worn at all times while on duty.

Uniforms should not be worn outside of the assigned park unless on official business which has been approved by the Park and Recreation Supervisor/Manager.

Campground Host vests and name tags must be returned to the Park and Recreation Supervisor at the end of the Host's assignment.

Training:

Campground Host duties will supplement the park staff in assisting and directing visitors to a campsite, explaining camping fees, assisting with camping activities, assisting with maintenance, supplying visitor information, and similar tasks. Ideally, the Host(s) should attend summer orientation required of all staff, if they are available.

All Hosts are required to attend a Campground Host Training Program during their first two years of service. Failure of Hosts to conform to minimum training requirements will result in termination of pending Host assignments, unless otherwise approved by the Division Volunteer Program Coordinator/Manager.

A copy of the Host Policy and Procedures, Park Rules and Regulations, the Camping Policy, and the Ranger Guide will be provided to Campground Hosts. Hosts are expected to become familiar with all rules and policies, and to comply with them.

Required Activities:

Campground Hosts must provide the following activities:

1. Weekly Coffee Hour (Park provides supplies).
2. Providing or Assisting with a Special Weekly Activity (1).
3. Daily Walk/Bike Tour of Campground.
4. Loan of Equipment.
5. Check Bathrooms.
6. Construct and/or Maintain Bulletin Board.
7. Create and/or Update Local Attractions Directory.
8. "In/Out" or "On Duty/Off Duty" sign. (optional)
9. Approximately 30 service hours per week contributed.

Liability:

While a volunteer is serving in the capacity of a Campground Host, he/she has the same immunity from civil liability as a Department employee and shall be treated in the same manner as an employee under section 8 of Act No. 170 of the Public Acts of 1964, being section [691.1408](#) of the Michigan Compiled Laws. The Volunteer Host must sign form PR0511 and have it on file with the Volunteer Host Program Manager.

Worker's Compensation:

Cases will be reviewed on an individual basis. At the time of an injury/accident, volunteers must notify their Site Supervisor. Park and Recreation Supervisors should contact DNR Disability

Manager, at 517-373-1207, for assistance and additional information. Volunteer Waiver form must be signed and returned prior to service and retained on file with the Unit.

Prohibited Acts:

1. Under no circumstances will Hosts be allowed to collect camping fees, MVP fees, or any other State of Michigan or concession operator's funds.
2. **Volunteers will not operate state-licensed road vehicles. The use of DNR-owned ATV's and ORV's is permitted, if duty-related and Supervisor approved.**
3. Campground Hosts will take no law enforcement measures. Infractions of park rules and policies will be reported to Park staff.
4. Personal gifts and gratuities will not be accepted.
5. Motor powered contrivances allowed per Parks & Recreation Policy 7.11 & 8.11 ONLY.

Termination and Evaluation:

When a Campground Host has completed the agreed upon period of service, the Host and Host Program Leader will complete Exit Evaluations for each Host team and Host single. These forms are available from the Volunteer Program Manager and should be completed and returned to Lansing within two weeks of departure.

All equipment and specified uniform items must be returned to the park when the volunteer assignment has ended.

Host Program Materials:

The following resources have been developed for use with the Volunteer Campground Host Program:

1. Liability Waiver form
2. [Host Application/Information](#)
3. Exit Evaluation (Program Leader)
4. Exit Evaluation (Host)
5. Host Training Program
6. [Expenditure Form -- PR3147](#)
7. [Program Codes](#)